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ONE 2 ONE

WITH DIRECTOR NANCY RICHARDSON

A little bit about a few things...

I don't usually make New Year's resolutions. Don't get me wrong, there are lots of things I need to improve on and other things I want to do...all the types of things that such resolutions are made of. I've just never gotten into making a once-a-year commitment to such goals. But, for some reason, I decided to make some New Year's resolutions this year. They weren't anything amazing, or even all that substantive. Lose weight – cliché. Retire – how hard can that be? Get a first-ever stamp in my passport – just takes a little planning and a bundle of money. And perform at least one random act of kindness each month – okay, this one makes up in substance what the other three lacked.

I didn't think much about it when I made the resolutions. I just thought I was affirming some goals I already had. Now one month later, I find I've already learned – or been reminded of – a couple of valuable lessons from my resolutions. One lesson is the obvious – it takes more than just setting a goal to accomplish it. I haven't made any progress on three of the resolutions so I need to again resolve (does resolve really just mean to re-solve the same nagging issues?) to work on my goals. But, I did my first random act of kindness last weekend. Boy, was that fun! I gave an unsuspecting stranger something of value free. No big deal, but it sure made me feel good. And I thought it was about making someone else feel better! Another lesson learned.

That brings me to the recent report of self-made multi-millionaire Iowan, Richard Jacobson, who just donated \$100 million to the Mayo Clinic for a cancer center. He's the same man who has given enough money to have buildings named after him at all of Iowa's universities. What intrigued me was not these big donations, for which he is known, but a story about how Mr. Jacobson treats his employees – providing them with really good retirement benefits, being interested and involved in their personal lives, and treating them with respect and friendship. Of course, in return he gets their respect, loyalty and affection.

He's a really wealthy man who donates huge sums of money to various causes, but is known for driving older cars, requiring employees to pump their own gas and encouraging other types of frugality. One of his employees said, "He's frugal, but not cheap. There's a difference." Now there's something to aspire to...frugality combined with generosity. Seems there is a lot to be learned from Mr. Jacobson not just about generosity, but about how to live one's life in a thoughtful way and how to care for and treat others.

Finally, speaking of things to aspire to, how about being a lifesaver! I get lots of snail and e-mail about things we do. Some of the notes are complaints and some are notes of appreciation. But it isn't every day I get an e-mail like the one I got this weekend about DOT employees saving a life. Last week three motor vehicle enforcement officers – James Flattery, Cindy Baker and Joe Nickell – were eating lunch at the Osceola Hy-Vee when another customer choked on some food, losing consciousness before James Flattery was able to dislodge the food. Cindy and Joe assisted by monitoring vitals and calling for help. They truly were in the right place at the right time. But, being in the right place at the right time is only great if you do the right thing. Boy did they do the right thing! Can't image a greater way to help someone – now that's a random act of kindness!!

So, how to tie this all up? It's simple...there is nothing to compare with helping others, no matter how small or how large the act of kindness. I highly recommend it!

Nancy

2010 Golden Dome Awards

The Iowa DOT was honored to have 11 employees recognized at the annual Golden Dome Awards in Des Moines. The Governor's Golden Dome Awards are the highest form of employee recognition based on accomplishments during the previous fiscal year (July – June). All Executive Branch employees are eligible for nomination. The DOT employees, along with approximately 100 other state workers, were recognized by Gov. Chet Culver at a ceremony Dec. 17 at the State Historical Building.

There were two types of awards given to DOTers this year. The Governor's Excellence Award recognizes employees for exemplary service. The Lt. Governor's Employee Volunteer Awards note exceptional volunteer efforts by state employees. State of Iowa employees nominate other employees they feel are deserving of the award(s) and who meet the minimum requirements as established by the governor and Iowa Department of Administrative Services and/or their appointees.

Governor's Excellence Award recipients

Tracey Bramble Multimedia Services



The Iowa DOT hosted the Mississippi Valley regional meeting in July 2010. The region consists of 10 Midwest states that are members of

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Bramble was instrumental in the success of this event as she handled or coordinated the logistics, signing and hotel staffing, and worked with the hotel as the primary event contact. This work was above and beyond her normal job duties.

The event was a success in large part because of Bramble's work. Bramble was the go-to person for the department in putting together and carrying out the Mississippi Valley Conference. This work clearly went beyond what would be expected of her in her normal job duties.

Nancy Goecke Information Technology Division



Goecke is a project manager on the Information Technology Division's Motor Vehicle Support Team. She epitomizes

effective project management. She gathers units of work and all supporting information to allow her team members to accomplish their work in priority order. Her knowledge of the

system, processes and people's working relationships is exemplary and is what helps to make her effective. She makes it so much easier for those working with her to do their jobs. Goecke always conducts herself in a business-like, professional manner. She leads by example to foster working relationships, and to look for win/win solutions for all parties involved; not just the project team for which she works. This quality is what makes her one of the most respected employees at the DOT. She also helps out the community by organizing volunteers for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

Kathy (Ohorilko) McLear Driver Services



McLear was a project manager in 2009-2010 for two significant driver's records projects: central issuance and a new system for storage of all

driver records. Central issuance required new procedures and business rules for mailing customer information. She also successfully designed and implemented a new electronic system for statewide storage of all driver's license records for the State of Iowa.



*Golden Dome Awards,
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Governor's state employee recognition

*Golden Dome Awards,
continued from previous page*

Joe Pitts Support Services



Pitts looks for cost effective ways to satisfy customer needs and timelines. When a customer thought she knew what

she wanted in her desk configuration, Pitts patiently listened to her ideas and then made suggestions that improved her workspace area. Not only did Pitts meet his customer's needs by using "recycled" products he had on hand, but was able to reuse and recycle the components from her office...thus saving time and money. Her workstation is now ergonomic and user-friendly. Pitts daily demonstrates his commitment to co-workers.

Hale Strasser Information Technology Division



Strasser supervises in a manner that allows each member to contribute and grow. He utilizes his three project managers effectively,

and promotes heightened awareness amongst teams within our department to facilitate using each team to its strengths, streamlining work.

He has a vested interest in providing good service to all of our customers by providing solutions that

best meet their needs. With the introduction of many new members to the team, Strasser promotes mentoring and developer topic meetings. He is also working towards implementing Team Foundation, which should improve the stability/efficiency of our software lifecycle process.

Once a month at our team meeting, Strasser hands out a sheet that allows people to offer ideas to "Stop," "Start" or "Continue." He is available at any time in his office for feedback, but wanted to allow people another mechanism to share what they feel is working or not working. This helps him gauge what direction to take by gathering feedback from members closest to the processes.

If there is ever a time where staff needs to do a unit of work off hours or over a weekend, Strasser always asks what he can do to help. If he is not here personally, he leaves several numbers where he can be reached. He does not expect his direct reports to do something that he, himself, would not be willing to do. The fact that he would come in and offer to do whatever he could to assist is appreciated and gives employees a feeling that "We are all in this together."



David Stutz Driver Services



Stutz is the program manager for implementation of the federal requirements of REAL ID. This has involved grant writing, con-

tinual tracking of updates and changes in federal law and suggesting Iowa rule and Code changes. His involvement has allowed Driver Services to make business changes so implementation will be successful. He has advised of changes in advance to make the transition easier. His knowledge of REAL ID is remarkable.

Janet Vine Location and Environment



In 2009 and 2010, Vine participated on a team preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed Chicago to

Iowa City passenger rail service. Vine worked within very tight timeframes to finalize environmental project documentation with Illinois DOT, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), consultants and other agencies. Vine's contributions were a key factor contributing to the high quality and timely completion of the environmental documents for the project.

*Golden Dome Awards,
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Governor's state employee recognition

Golden Dome Awards, continued from previous page

Vine was tasked with working with the FRA on environmental documents. The FRA processes are different than the typical Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) processes with which DOT staff are accustomed. New procedures, tight deadlines and multiple state agencies made this project a complex undertaking. However, Vine was able to draw upon her FHWA experiences and previous work with other states to lead a document review that resulted in consensus among all parties regarding the environmental requirements.

The timeframe for the environmental documents for this project was extremely compressed. Vine responded very quickly with all reviews and provided concise direction for the project documentation at each milestone of development. Vine's professionalism and positive attitude are an inspiration to everyone who works with her.

Barb West Driver Services



West was a project manager for Iowa's transition from an "over-the-counter" driver's license renewal system to the new central issuance process. This change was significant to the citizens of Iowa. It changed a process that had been in place since the beginning of issuance of licenses. The new process involved planning, research and education for customers, law enforcement and business owners. The new process started April 2010 and was a complete success.

Lt. Governor's Employee Volunteer Award recipients

Zhaia Mergen Multimedia Services



Mergen has been active in supporting her child's school fundraising events for years. She has volunteered at and chaired many of

the events. Whatever task needs done, she is there. Mergen also volunteers for many of the DOT All for One charity events and serves on the planning committees. Mergen may often be found working behind the scenes, but she gets the job done. With today's economy, it is more important than ever to assist in planning charity events.

Tanner Thomsen Support Services



Thomsen has volunteered for multiple years on the annual Dragoon River Romp and served as a member of the finance committee for the organization. This volunteer effort cleans the environment as part

of the Des Moines River watershed cleanup in Boone County. Planning begins in January each year and ends on a Saturday in September with cleaning the river landside and waterways. It is important to the community that volunteers provide this service as part of the Keep Iowa Beautiful plan.

DOT-related Governor's Excellence Award

Chris Crow Attorney General's office (assigned to Iowa DOT)



Crow's ability to maintain ongoing communication with her office's clients is an asset to the DOT. She has an innate ability for managing time.

She demonstrates the ability to properly assess the time it takes to complete tasks and to schedule the tasks into the available time at work. She has a positive attitude and is enthusiastic in her approach for getting the work prioritized. She follows up when tasks are assigned to staff and updates each project's status to our office. Crow has a high standard of ethics that is shown throughout her work.



Governor's state employee recognition

Lean Kaizen streamlines TRL application process

When many employees hear the words “continuous improvement” process they say to themselves, “Here we go again.” Over the years, Iowa state government has been involved with numerous improvement processes, with varying degrees of success. One improvement tool now in action in the Iowa DOT’s Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) is the Kaizen process, supported by the Iowa Department of Management’s (DOM) Office of Lean Enterprise.

Kaizen is Japanese for “change for the better.” To be successful, DOM’s website states the work process being examined should be large-volume, follow the same steps each time and be a core business activity. Mark Lowe, MVD director, says his group chose the temporary restricted license (TRL) issuance system to go under the microscope in Kaizen sessions Dec. 6-10.

Lowe said, “We chose the TRL process because there have been changes to the law recently and we knew the process wasn’t working as well as we would like. Kaizen is a tool, a way to look at a process and find ways to make it better by breaking down and examining each element. With assistance from a facilitator from DOM, we assembled a team of 12 people; four that work directly with the process, four that have some knowledge of TRL and four from outside the process or customers of the TRL process. This gave a wide perspective to the week-long meeting that pulls apart the existing way of doing business and then rebuilds it, with the goal of removing bottlenecks and inefficiencies.”

Brandie McCuen-Burgos, public service supervisor 3 in Driver Services, was a TRL process team member. She said, “When I first received the meeting notice for the Kaizen TRL process improvement, I had no idea what Kaizen was. I Googled it and found out that it basically meant to improve a process. That gave me a basic understanding of what I was getting into. We had a pre-event meeting to give us an overview of what we were supposed to do and to outline objectives. I have never been through a Kaizen or Lean process, so I did not have any preconceived thoughts. Now that I have been through the process, I feel it is very beneficial, especially because we are going to have to find ways to get our processing times somewhere close to where they were before the recent retirements, without adding employees.”

The TRL process team set lofty goals, reducing lead time by 50 percent, from 30 to 15 days, and reducing the number of steps in the process by half. McCuen-Burgos said, “The only way to find improvements is to actually map in great detail all the steps it takes to do something and find out where the delays are and if there really are unnecessary steps that can be eliminated.”

“When I first heard that I was going to be attending the Kaizen project, I had no idea what I was getting into,” said Dawn Hackleman, administrative assistant 2 in Driver Services.



Dawn Hackleman, administrative assistant 2, works through the current TRL process on paper as part of a Kaizen exercise.

After our pre-meeting, I was very skeptical about how we were going to improve the TRL process. I’m all for change for the better; it’s just often difficult getting others on board after we figure out what we think we can accomplish. Working with updating the old TRL process because of the law change and then reworking those changes through the Kaizen process, I saw room for improvement. I just didn’t know how we were going to go about accomplishing the streamlining.”

At the end of the Kaizen session, which in this case, took 4½ working days, there was a plan in place to change the process right away. Lowe said, “Management buy-in is essential to make this work. We have to trust that the team members are doing a great job of making the process more efficient and effective. Quick implementation of the improvements they find is vital to continued success. On our team, it was very helpful to have an information technology team member so we could make sure the changes the team wanted to make were able to be accomplished.”

Hackleman said, “Going through the week-long process was tough at times. But when you are forced to step back and think of ways to improve the process with several other people involved, you can come up with some good results. We had some great solutions that I think we can implement.”

Another key to success is follow-up. Lowe said, “While the improvements are identified during the Kaizen sessions, the real work begins at implementation and follow through. The team will meet again periodically over the next year to see how the TRL process is working and make further adjustments as necessary.”

With the completion of one Kaizen improvement under their belts, Lowe says MVD is looking forward to two or three more projects in 2011. “It was encouraging to see the process unfold. By the end, even the skeptics were on board. With the assistance of DOM, we look forward to continuing to review our processes in this pragmatic way.”

Recovery Act funding aids rail projects



There are many things the Iowa DOT does extremely well. The agency has excellent systems in place to manage highway maintenance and construction projects. Those systems were put to the test when they were recently applied to four railroad track projects.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Recovery Act) of 2009 provided funding for many aspects of transportation infrastructure. Freight rail was not among the project types with specific Recovery Act funding. After research on whether Recovery Act funds set aside for highways could be used for rail infrastructure projects, Director Nancy Richardson and the Iowa Transportation Commission set aside \$5 million of Iowa's Recovery Act funding for projects to add or enhance freight rail service capabilities.

The Iowa DOT received 33 applications for funding, totaling more than \$48 million, from railroads, businesses, local governments and a regional development corporation. These projects were evaluated based on their:

- Level of readiness to be constructed in a timely manner.
- Potential for economic development.
- Freight traffic benefits, such as increased capability to move freight, improved service to rail customers or value of rail access to a business or group of businesses.

In May 2009, the Iowa Transportation Commission approved four railroad development and rehabilitation projects.

1. \$2 million: The Clinton Regional Development Corporation will build rail access into an industrial park and add passing track that facilitates switching, which will serve and attract rail transportation-dependent industry.
2. \$235,800: The city of Keokuk submitted an application for the Mississippi River bridge at Keokuk, which has an electric-powered swing span that dates to 1913 that opens to allow barge traffic to pass. The electrical components will be updated to improve reliability and increase efficiency by allowing more rail traffic to utilize the bridge.
3. \$2 million: The Iowa Interstate Railroad Intermodal Facility in Council Bluffs will be upgraded to improve



This stretch of 1930s vintage track on the D & W Railroad near Dewar was in extremely poor condition and needed rehabilitation.

efficiency. Improvements include a drainage system, paving and track rehabilitation to enhance customer service and serve additional markets.

4. \$764,200: The D & W Railroad will upgrade track between Dewar and Oelwein to enhance safety and allow for increased weight capacity.

Staff from the Office of Rail Transportation enlisted the assistance of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to assure the projects met all the criteria necessary for Recovery Act funding.

Tammy Nicholson, Office of Rail Transportation director, said, "This was a whole new way to do business. We had great cooperation from every office in the DOT that was involved in the process, including Systems Planning,

Rail projects, continued on next page

Rail projects, continued from previous page

Local Systems, Location and Environment, Design, Materials, Specifications, Contracts, Finance and field staff in districts 2, 4 and 6, as well as the impacted cities.

Mary Jo Key, transportation planner 2 in Rail Transportation, said, "Just as it may 'take a village to raise a child,' I'm convinced it took the whole DOT to complete a Recovery Act funded rail project. Everyone we worked with had their own work to do, but they took the time to assist us in the process and make these projects successful." The expertise of field staff Dave Roeber, Ron Loecher, Tom Brunscheon and Dean Wiebke of District 2; George Feazell, Vince Ehlert and Gary Osby of District 4; and Roger Boulet and Doug Heeren of District 6 was invaluable.

The D & W Railroad track upgrade project was chosen to be audited by a national FHWA review team. The review team praised the cooperation of involved entities who worked cooperatively to design, let and administer a unique project to rehabilitate the existing rail line. The national

review noted, "The Iowa DOT and the other parties (including the FHWA Division Office) should be commended for successfully completing the first-of-its-kind federal-aid project in Iowa."

John Adam, Highway Division director, who also attended the close-out meeting, said, "The FHWA Review Team was highly complimentary of the collaborative effort of the District 2 and Rail Transportation office staff in getting this non-typical project under contract. Thanks to all who have contributed to this effort."

According to Nicholson, only a handful of other states also used Recovery Act funding for rail projects. She said, "Iowa continues to be a leader in transportation and recognizes that all modes are important to Iowa's transportation system. This investment showed that rail projects, which have benefits for the entire transportation system and economy of the state, can be implemented quickly and efficiently."



A national review team from the Federal Highway Administration audited the rehabilitated D & W Railroad track near Dewar. They praised the efforts of all entities involved for working cooperatively to accomplish this first-of-its-kind project in Iowa.

Nick Humpal

Design employee of the year



for the Pittsburgh Steelers. Two of my sisters played college volleyball. I guess my niche is engineering."

As a testament to his ability to convert his engineering knowledge to practical applications, Flattery said, "Nick has been the main designer for the Johnson County Interstate 80, six-lane project in Iowa City. This is a large project that involves multiple lettings, storm sewer design and complicated staging. Nick has been able to handle this project with little or no help from others."

Humpal says he enjoys the challenges that come with his job. "On the I-80 job, that was a four-lane to six-lane reconstruction I got to do storm sewer layouts, which I had not done before. There was also a lot of staging and detail work that I enjoy because it requires staying on task, being organized and setting priorities to be successful."

But Humpal is not one of those workers who keeps to himself. Flattery said, "Nick demonstrates excellent teamwork and leadership skills. He is willing to help when asked with projects on tight time frames without his own workload being delayed. He has helped with multiple projects including U.S. 30 in Tama County, U.S. 20 in Calhoun County, Iowa 1 in Johnson County and the roundabout on Iowa 3 in Fayette County. His involvement in these projects has made the difference in successfully keeping these projects on schedule. Nick took the lead on the roundabout project, which allowed me to help with other projects in the section. It is nice to know I can ask him to do certain parts of a plan and he can get it done with very little explanation or assistance. His knowledge in plan preparation has been an asset to the section, especially when we were short staffed."

Growing up in rural northeast Iowa with five siblings, Nick Humpal learned how to remain positive when faced with complex tasks, work with a team and get things done. Humpal, now an Iowa DOT transportation engineer, recently became the 2010 Office of Design employee of the year for just those reasons.

Paul Flattery, Humpal's supervisor, submitted the nomination to the office committee charged with the selection. Flattery said, "Nick is a quick learner, able to work independently, very thorough in plan development and review and understands engineering principles. Nick has a great working relationship with everyone in the office and his biggest strength is his positive attitude."

Humpal takes it all back to his New Hampton roots. "My brother and sisters all excelled at something," he said, "My brother Mike was a football player at Iowa and then he went on to play

"Nick has a great working relationship with everyone in the office and his biggest strength is his positive attitude."

**Paul Flattery,
Humpal's supervisor**

Learning new technologies is another aspect Humpal says he likes about his job. "I've started working with three-dimensional modeling. With that, you get an instant vision of the road design without it being built. The technology can be very useful to locate potential trouble spots in a design."

In regard to Humpal's knowledge of the three-dimensional modeling technology, Flattery said, "Nick is very knowledgeable in GEOPAK and our design process with regards to the computer application. Nick doesn't let new challenges slow him down. Nick learned how to work with 3D files and create and merge files on his own. A lot of the special ditching situations on the roundabout project were done in 3D and then transferred to the cross sections. Nick is becoming the go-to guy for corridor modeling questions and co-workers are comfortable coming to Nick for any computer questions."

In addition to his impressive skill set, Humpal took on extra duties in a leadership role, serving as the assistant section leader to Flattery when the section was short staffed. About his Employee of the Year honor, Humpal says, "It was really nice to be nominated, and I was really surprised when I found out I won. There are a lot of great people in our office."

Improve your knowledge and skills with a click of your mouse

Lifelong learning is the quest of many Iowa DOT employees. To encourage employees to be students at any age and keep skills sharp, the Office of Materials offers several web-based, interactive courses available to employees at no charge. The courses can be viewed anytime and the student will progress at his/her own pace. The training website is located at <http://www.iowadot.gov/training/index.html>.

The website contains both general knowledge courses and classes related to an employee's technical training and certification. For more information on the certification course, click on the "Technical Training and Certification Program" URL from the main training page link above.

To view a course, the employee-student should click on "Web-Based Training Courses" and follow instructions. The student will need to set up learning credentials to get a login and password to view the courses. Once the learning credentials are established, the student can view any of the web-based courses at any time. Chris Anderson, technical training coordinator from the Office of Materials, said, "This site contains some great courses, as well as reviews for a number of the certification courses. There is no charge for any of the DOT web-based courses and courses are continually added, so check back for new courses."

Courses now available:

- Math
- Ethics in Transportation
- Basic Materials
- Daily Diary (record keeping)
- Basic Construction Survey
- Plan Reading
- Introduction to PCC Paving Inspection
- HMA Paving Field Inspection
- Bolted Connections
- Preventive Maintenance and Pavement Preservation
- Integrated Materials and Construction Practices for Concrete Pavement Series
- PCC Construction
- Testing Self-Consolidated Concrete
- Advanced Self-Consolidated Concrete
- Maintenance of Traffic for Technicians
- Maintenance of Traffic for Supervisors
- Safety Orientation
- Safe Use of Hand and Power Tools
- Safe Use of Carpentry Tools
- CDL Courses
- Recognizing Roadside Weeds
- GPS

Review materials are also available for Level I Aggregate, Level II Aggregate, Level I PCC, Level II PCC, HMA Sampler, Level I HMA, Level II HMA, and Profilograph.

For any problems with the web-based courses or for information, contact Chris Anderson, technical training coordinator, at christie.anderson@dot.iowa.gov or 515-239-1819.



Simplifying the search

The amount of information produced in an agency the size of the Iowa DOT is staggering. By definition, the majority of this information is a "record" that is mandated to be stored for a period of time and be retrievable. The electronic records management system (ERMS), now a part of the Information Technology Division, has long been tasked with collecting, indexing and making those records available for viewing. Text-based searches have been the norm since ERMS began in the 1990s. These searches rely on words called indexes input by the person storing the document. To retrieve the record, the searcher must match at least part of one of these index words.

Successful retrieval of documents in ERMS is affected by the number of users in the system and their different use of vocabulary. In 2008, the ERMS team, led by Kelly Popp, enlisted the assistance of the Iowa DOT's geographic information systems (GIS) group to enhance a record retrieval method that relies on geographic locations instead of index words when searching for records. Eric Abrams, Iowa DOT GIS coordinator said, "ERMS is a way to manage and share records, and the GIS interface allows those records to be searched spatially. By linking databases already in existence, one click on a map will bring up stored records related to that geographic location."

Databases are the backbone of the ERMS/GIS project. Abrams said, "Documents don't magically appear. They need to have sound databases with a spatial location for the information. We know there are many databases that can be run through this system and benefit the end users."

Popp added, "Databases that contain GIS information may also make indexing records easier. Oftentimes, the information in the database can be used to index records, al-

lowing the record index to perfectly match the business data. This consistent use of vocabulary will provide for improved search results."

Linking the databases together and making the records related to the databases searchable by geographic information require the use of geospatial web services. One service called OWL was developed by Matt Rohlf on the Iowa DOT's geospatial coordination and infrastructure team. OWL links various databases together when they contain the same geographic location information. Abrams said, "The Linear Referencing System web service JetFire does the same thing with milepost information, literal descriptions, mile point and coordinates, but the OWL service includes other location information to link databases like buildings and bridges."

Searching for ERMS documents can be added to any GIS map at the Iowa DOT. Didum Abraham, a part-time programmer working with Abrams and Rohlf, developed a prototype to show how easy it can be to search for documents (<http://dotnet/gis/geonexus/flex/erms/ermspage.html>).

Popp says it is still very early in the process of linking all DOT geographic information data together. "My part in the process is to work with a customer who has records that need to be managed, who may have a business database and wants the information linked together in ERMS." Abrams added, "The GIS team can then build an OWL service to accomplish that goal. The process is becoming more automated and we can reuse many of the databases that already exist."

So far a pilot of seven types of documents from Transportation Data has yielded good results. Abrams said, "This process is working to make state government more transparent, with records easier to access."

Check it out

To see how the ERMS search map works,

- Go to <http://dotnet/gis/geonexus/flex/erms/ermspage.html>
- Zoom to selected area and search for documents by adding a point line or polygon to the desired area to search
- Experience how geometry is passed to ERMS and opens an ERMS viewer with documents related to the selection location
- Select a document you want to view

Central complex coat drive

In November, central complex employees donated coats and other winter gear for two local agencies, Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support (ACCESS) and the Emergency Residence Project (ERP). Between the two shelters, Iowa DOT employees donated the following.

To ACCESS, for kids:	To ACCESS and ERP, for adults:
25 coats	46 coats (men)
4 snow pants	36 coats (women)
11 hats	6 headbands
21 pair mittens	7 pair gloves (women)
5 scarves	3 pair gloves (men)
	1 pair boots (men)
	10 hats (adult)
	1 pair jeans (men)
	1 vest (women)
	4 scarves (adult)

Accepting the donations for ACCESS were (left) Adam, a child advocate, and (center) Monica, a volunteer coordinator, with (right) DOTer LaDana Sogard.



Accepting the donations for ERP was (left) Vic Moss, director, with (right) DOTer LaDana Sogard.



TOYS FOR TOTS

The giving spirit of the season was in full force as Iowa DOT offices in Ames and Ankeny combined for this year's Toys for Tots campaign. Totals donated for activities included:

- \$506.15 - cinnamon/pecan roll sale (36 dozen rolls donated by the Lincoln Center HyVee)
- \$538.77 - baked goods/popcorn sale (baked goods from employees and popcorn and popper donated by MEMBERS1st Community Credit Union)
- \$475 - soup lunch (17 containers of soup provided by DOT employees)
- \$240 - CD sale - (reproduced CD of Christmas music originally recorded by DOT employees five years ago)
- \$4,165.50 - All for One Auction (held in October with a total of \$8,825 raised and proceeds divided between the Food Drive and Toys for Tots campaigns)
- \$297.82 - DOT Wear
- \$4,793.49 - cash donations
- 375 - toys donated

Around Iowa, state government agencies donated \$38,585.09 and 3,340 toys. Of that total, \$11,016.73 (28 percent) and 375 toys came from the Iowa DOT.



DOT spirit of giving goes on and on

Each year during the holidays, DOT employees around the state show their giving nature as they collect money, gifts and necessities for those less fortunate.

District 2



(From left to right) Kelly Arnborg, District 2 materials; Mark Callahan, District 2 Office; and Laurie Brandt, a case worker for North Iowa Community Action

Employees from the District 2 Office, annex and materials lab sponsored an older north Iowan, "Dan," for the Christmas season. Working with North Iowa Community Action (NICA), the group chose Dan who the organization said had never had Christmas presents as a part of his life, even as a child. In cooperation with NICA caseworker, the DOT employees gathered items the caseworker said would be special to Dan.

In addition to the gifts donated to Dan through NICA, donations were also made to the Francis Lauer Youth Shelter in Mason City. The shelter serves kids in many ways, especially those young people in need of emergency shelter. The director said the shelter would be full during Christmas and the donations would help staff purchase gifts on the "Santa Wish Lists" so the kids could have a little Christmas joy.

The Waterloo maintenance employees collected several



items for the Cedar Bend Humane Society.

Every Christmas the Waterloo maintenance garage employees pool their resources to help a deserving charity. This year, Highway Technician Associate Randy Beard told Highway Maintenance Supervisor Doug Lickteig, "It would be really neat this year to do something for our four-legged friends." So the group chose the Cedar Bend Humane Society. During the month of December, employees collected pet food, chew toys, collars and other necessities for the animal shelter. A few days before Christmas, Beard and several other employees sorted and delivered the items.

Sioux City and Spencer DL stations

The true meaning of Christmas



was felt by a young girl from Holstein. Jocelyn Draper is a third grader at Galva-Holstein community schools. She was diagnosed with a cancer known as Ewings sarcoma more than a year ago.

She has not been able to go to school since the end of September, and will soon begin receiving her chemotherapy treatments at home.

Katie Ferdig, driver's license clerk at the Sioux City DL station, told Jocelyn's story to her co-workers. Ferdig found out that Jocelyn's mom wished she had a small video camera to set up in Jocelyn's bedroom. The employee at the Sioux City and Spencer DL stations pooled their money and bought the family a video camera, reminding us all that giving to others is the reason behind the season. Driver's License Supervisor Amy Sievers said, "Thanks DL 08 and DL 32. You make me proud!"



Sioux City DL station employees: (front row, from left) Katie Ferdig, Tammy Wright, Amy Hill, Amy Sievers; (back row, from left) Kathi Simenson, Kris Miene, Sue Flom, Tish Berger



Spencer DL employees (front row, from left) Kathy Matthews, Anna Schmidt; (back row) Barb Honkomp

DOTer to the rescue of a blizzard baby

Many a pregnant woman has had a nightmare where she could not reach the hospital in time for the arrival of her bundle of joy. Denise Franzen and her husband, Scott, were snuggled in their bed in Saint Lucas in Fayette County about 11:15 p.m. on Dec. 11. Outside, a blizzard was raging. Inside, the due date for the couple's third child was passing.

About that time, labor pains woke Denise. She waited until 12:30 a.m. to wake Scott, who looked out the window and thought there was no way they were going anywhere. Denise called the Winneshiek Medical Center in Decorah where she was supposed to give birth. They advised her to go to Palmer Lutheran Health Center in West Union because it was closer.

At 12:45 a.m., Scott called 911 and told a Fayette County dispatcher that his wife was in labor. While many Iowa DOT



Grant Doeppke

had been pulled off the roads because of the conditions, Iowa DOT snowplow driver Grant Doeppke, a temporary employee from the West Union garage, heard the dispatch on a portable radio he carries as a part-time deputy for the Clayton County Sheriff's Office. He confirmed with his DOT supervisor that he could go off his snow route for this emergency. He radioed 911 dispatchers that he was at the corner of U.S. 18 and Iowa 150 in West Union, volunteering to lead the way to Saint Lucas for Northeast Iowa Medical Transport Ambulance driver Jeremy Davis, paramedic Joan Betthauser and Palmer Lutheran Health Center nurse Deb Brink. They were soon on the way to the Franzen home.

While many Iowa DOT snowplows had been pulled off the roads because of the conditions, Iowa DOT snowplow driver Grant Doeppke, a temporary employee from the West Union garage, heard the dispatch on a portable radio he carries as a part-time deputy for the Clayton County Sheriff's

With the ambulance on the way, Scott stayed on the phone with Palmer Lutheran emergency room nurse Cyndi and the 911 dispatcher. Cyndi kept Scott calm for a moment he will never forget. Scott, who works for a dairy farmer and has helped deliver baby sheep and calves before, was about to deliver his own baby boy. While Scott says he does not remember much about the brief labor, the delivery was relatively easy and Maxton Joseph officially entered the world Dec. 12 at 1:13 a.m. The baby's cries could be heard over the phone by the 911 dispatcher and the Palmer Lutheran nurse, as well as upstairs by the sleeping Franzen children, Emma, 10, and Kaden, 4. The two kids quickly ran downstairs to see about the commotion.

By 1:30 a.m., First Responders from Waucoma had arrived. The ambulance, with its Iowa DOT snowplow escort, was not far behind, arriving about 1:45 a.m. With the wind whipping the snow around in plummeting temperatures, Doeppke and the ambulance driver carried Denise and the new baby into the ambulance. Scott put the couple's other two children in the family pickup. The ambulance and pickup, with their snowplow escort, headed down County Road W-14 to U.S. 18. All three vehicles arrived safely at Palmer Lutheran at 3:10 a.m. The First Responders were told if they had trouble getting back to Waucoma, that they should call the dispatcher and DOT plow driver Doeppke would return to plow a way home for them, too.

At the hospital, Denise, the baby and "Dr. Scott" Franzen were all in great shape. Officially, the baby weighed in at 8 pounds, 2½ ounces and was 21 inches long.

Denise said, "We were very impressed by the way Grant got the roads cleared off. He had cleared the way for the ambulance, but by the time we were ready to leave the house the roads had blown closed again. Grant just plowed them back open for us. He really went above and beyond the call of duty that night! We greatly appreciate his expertise in navigating the snow-covered roads, and are blessed that he was on duty."

Family happenings

Transportation Data Jodi Clement



Mike Clement, transportation planner 2, and Jodi Malin, secretary 2, both of Transportation Data were married Oct. 2. Congratulations to the happy couple!

In Memory

Rosalyn Rane Berrett Hassall, 33, of Kelley and Fort Dodge, passed away unexpectedly Dec. 23. Hassall was born in Ames Oct. 23, 1977. She graduated



from Ballard High School in 1996 and received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education

from Iowa State University in 2000. She was married on Oct. 10, 2010, to the love of her life, Alan Hassall. She taught French in the Ankeny School District before she began working in the Iowa DOT's District 1 Office.

Following her marriage, Hassall left the Iowa DOT and recently started working in schools again as a substitute teacher, which she loved. Hassall enjoyed attending cooking demonstrations and testing the recipes out on her friends and family, as well as searching out entertainment with Alan. Together they enjoyed traveling and watching movies. She was an honest friend to everyone she met. She always wore a smile and showed her kind heart.

Hassall is survived by her adoring husband, Alan; parents, Wayne and Millie Berrett; sister Roxanne (Levi) Bappe; parents-in-law, Ron and Marilyn Hassall; brother-in-law Kevin (Lesya) Hassall; and four nieces and nephews.

Cecil L. Sutliff, 83, of Sioux City passed away Monday, Dec. 20, at his residence. Sutliff was born Sept. 13, 1927, in Hubbard, Neb., to Albert and Cora (Taylor) Sutliff. He graduated from Belden (Neb.) High School with the class of 1945, before enlisting in the U.S. Army, serving during the Korean conflict in Germany and Korea. Sutliff received his honorable discharge in September 1952.

Following his military career, Sutliff obtained his engineering degree from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Sutliff married Emmaline Beardshear on Dec. 12, 1960, in Elk Point, S.D. The couple made Sioux City their home. He worked as a consultant for Buell and Winters before joining the Iowa DOT as a civil engineer, a career he enjoyed for more than 27 years. He retired as the Sioux City resident maintenance engineer in February 1993. Sutliff received a letter of appreciation from the Iowa State Patrol concerning his assistance during a snow event in January 1988, and a letter of commendation from the Iowa State Patrol for his assistance with

the crash of flight 232 on July 19, 1989. Even after his retirement, Sutliff continued to offer his services as an engineer to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for nearly 10 years.

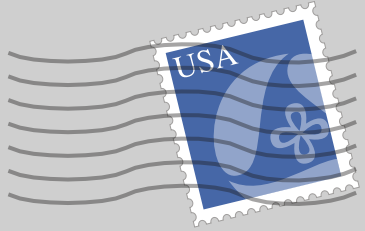
Sutliff is survived by his wife, Emmaline of Sioux City; sons, James Sutliff and Larry (Rhonda Servicss) Sutliff, of Sioux City; daughter, Linda (Stuart) Kappes of Pierson, Iowa; seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Keith E. Davis, 87, of Ames died Wednesday, Dec. 8, at Mary Greeley Medical Center of complications of diabetes. Davis was born Sept. 22, 1923, in Bonaparte to Arthur and Irena (Boughton) Davis. He graduated in 1941 from Diagonal High School. After high school he served in the U.S. Army with the 42nd Infantry Rainbow Division 222nd Infantry during World War II where he fought in the Battle of the Bulge and helped to liberate the Dachau Concentration Camp and earned the Bronze Star.

Following the war, Davis attended Iowa State College where he graduated in 1949 with a civil engineering degree. In 1944, Davis married Marjorie Bentley and together they raised four children. Davis spent 38 years with the Iowa DOT, 24 of which he served as director of the Office of Contracts in Ames.

In 1977, Davis was awarded the Iowa Bulldog Award for Public Service for protecting the taxpayer dollar, presented by Governor Robert Ray. Following retirement he served for nine years as the director of membership and services for the Associated General Contractors of Iowa. In his free time, Davis enjoyed playing golf, and was a charter member of the Ballard Country Club. He was a Shriner, Mason and member of Ames Golden K Kiwanis Club. He also

Family happenings, continued on page 17



Kudos!

These are letters that have been submitted to the editor. They may have been edited for length and continuity.

To: Nancy Richardson, Iowa DOT
From: Dixie Makedonski, Des Moines construction office

I just wanted to send a big THANK-YOU to the Williams maintenance shop. My daughter drives back and forth from our home in Roland to UNI for classes this semester several times a week on U.S. 20. A couple of weeks ago, while traveling home from Cedar Falls, she had a mechanical problem with her cruise control. She lost control of the car and spun 360 degrees a few times, as well as traveling back and forth across the road. Once she was able to come to a stop, four men who had been working nearby came over to make sure she was okay. Luckily, she was only shook up and no one was hurt (she had seen the workers on the road and was very afraid that she would hit them). As a mom and a fellow DOTer, I just wanted to tell the men thanks so much for checking on my daughter after her wild ride. It meant a lot to both of us.

(Editor's note: The men who came to the rescue were Russ Neely, highway technician senior, District 1 bridge crew; Anthony Clabaugh, highway technician associate from the Williams garage; and Jeff Roll and Mark Fevold, highway technician associates from the Iowa Falls garage.)

To: Mary Guillaume, Motor Carrier Services
From: Allen Perkins, Alter Trading Corporation, St. Louis

Please accept our gratitude and appreciation for the work the Motor Carrier Services groups do in providing us with the patient guidance and support we need to meet our obligations as a motor carrier based in your state. Our family of companies operates facilities in many states bringing us into contact with many governmental agents and agencies of all kinds: local, state and federal. With all the different organizations and agencies I encounter, your groups are the most helpful and informative. I believe you all should be giving lessons. So thank you, all, for making our work more effective.

To: Iowa DOT
From Barbara McMickle

You did a terrific job clearing our roads after the Christmas Eve storm. We needed to travel Interstate 380 from Cedar Rapids to Cedar Falls on Christmas morning. When we needed to go, the road was in excellent shape. You brightened our day and we thank you so much!

To: Mark Lowe, Motor Vehicle Division
From: Holly Mueggenberg, Iowa Motor Truck Association

On behalf of the Iowa Motor Truck Association (IMTA), I would like to thank you for being a part of our Licensing and Regulations Seminar held at the IMTA office Dec. 8. We are always pleased to have you as part of our program. We hope you found the seminar to be a rewarding experience.

The IMTA recognizes the importance of continued education and designs educational opportunities that meet the many different needs of the professionals in the trucking industry. With the support of organizations such as yours, we have had the opportunity to offer our members quality educational programs with great success.

This seminar was well received. Please also share my thanks with Deb and Randy for their presentations at this seminar. I really appreciate your help!

(Editor's note: The employees mentioned in this letter are Randy Barton, revenue auditor 3, from Finance; and Deb Roeder, executive officer 1 in Motor Carrier Services.)

To: Iowa DOT
From: Louis R. Billmyer, Cresco

I have lived in Cresco all my life, except for six years when I was in the U.S. Navy in World War II. I turned 90 in October. I want to commend your changing Iowa 9 through Cresco from a four-lane to a three-lane highway. The center lane is a turning lane with one lane on each side. This change has slowed traffic. It keeps the trucks in line a proper speed and reduces crashes. It was an excellent change in every detail.

(Editor's note: This project happened in 2008. In 2009, 11 crashes occurred in the corridor. This compares to an average of just more than 17 crashes per year from 2003 to 2007. The highest annual total was in 2005 when 23 crashes occurred. Records show 11 crashes in 2009 after the three-lane conversion was complete. This is the lowest annual total since 2001. The number of injuries was also lower in 2009, with only two injuries occurring in those 11 crashes. There was an average of five injuries per year over the 2003 to 2007 period.)

Kudos!, continued on next page

Kudos!, continued from previous page

To: INSIDE Magazine
From: The Dubuque Driver's License Station team



For an October meeting, Chrissy Whitman, driver's license clerk, came up with a game she called "DOT Jeopardy" to help our team understand recent operational and policy changes. She based the questions on E-mails and memos sent by supervisors Denise Said and Angie Owen. Some of the categories she chose were: ERMS/scanning, documentation of foreign nationals and records retention. Just for fun, she threw in a Halloween category. For the meeting, Chrissy was dressed in an old DOT Parka and plastic black eyeglass frames and called herself "Honest," as she explained the rules of the game. The biggest rule was making sure when you answered the question, you started it with "What is ...". Making the DOT Jeopardy game took an exceptional amount of time, effort and thought. She came up with a fun way to review material and show her team the meaning of "above and beyond." Kudos to Chrissy!!

To: Tony Lazarowicz, District 3 engineer
From: James Laubscher, Denison

Just a few lines to let you and the paint crew know just how good a job they do here in Crawford County. Hang on to those people, they are the best! Another thank you to the contractor that repaired the bridge deck and sides over the East Boyer River – a very, very good job. This is one taxpayer who is happy to pay my taxes.

To: Iowa DOT road crews
From: Dan Cristison, Moline, Ill.

I just wanted to thank everyone who worked on the roads on Friday, Dec. 24, and Saturday, Dec. 25. With all of the snow that we received, you people did a great job. The roads that I travel to work were in great shape. Keep up the good work and thanks for all your help.

Family happenings, continued from page 15

enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, including his daily 4 p.m. Geezers social. He also liked to follow Iowa State Cyclones athletics. For 14 years the Davises spent their winters in Pharr, Texas. They were privileged to enjoy 66 years together.

Davis is survived by his wife, Marge, of Ames, and four children Tish (Bill) Cook of Greenwood, Minn.; Steve (Deb) Davis of Bondurant; Linda Silka (Larry Smith) of Orono, Maine; Mark (Kathy) Davis of Ames; and seven grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.



Roy Coslow, 94, of Lincoln, Nebraska (formerly of Britt), passed away Saturday, Dec. 25. Coslow, the son of David and Eunice (Cornett) Coslow, was born Sept. 21, 1916, in Webster City. Coslow attended country schools through the eighth grade and graduated from Webster City High School in 1935. He

enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps from 1936 to 1938 where he was trained as a surveyor. On May 26, 1941, Coslow married Phyllis Malmberg in Chillicothe, Miss. They moved to Chicago where he worked as a street photographer, in a book bindery and as an engineering assistant.

In 1946, the couple moved to Britt where Coslow worked as a road surveyor and inspector for the Iowa DOT's Britt construction office until his retirement in 1980. He moved to Lincoln, Neb., in 2005.

Coslow enjoyed traveling, photography, ballroom dancing, gardening, woodworking and woodcarving. He was involved in Scouting for many years, serving as Scoutmaster for Britt Troop 32, and he was a member of Dorius Masonic Lodge #431. The Coslows traveled throughout the United States and to Europe where he celebrated his 80th birthday in Sweden. They loved attending their grandchildren's activities in Michigan and Nebraska, and he accompanied his son-in-law and grandchildren on a number of BRAN rides. Coslow was a long-time member of the Britt Congregational United Church of Christ where he served as a deacon, trustee and usher; and in Lincoln he was a member of Vine Congregational United Church of Christ.

Coslow is survived by his children, James (Barbara) Coslow and Susan (Dennis) Emanuel, five grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, two brothers, two sisters, two sisters-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

Personnel updates

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for Nov. 26, 2010 to Dec. 24, 2010

New hires

Bryon Anderson, highway technician associate, Williams garage; **Robert Ankerstjerne**, highway technician associate, Sloan garage; **Kelly Bernady**, secretary 1, Ames maintenance; **Zachary Bitting**, transportation planner 2, Program Management; **Zachary Burgher**, mechanic, Centerville garage; **Joel Collier**, highway technician associate, Clarion garage; **Jacqueline DiGiacinto**, executive officer 1, Maintenance; **Brennan Dolan**, historic preservation specialist, Location and Environment; **William Downs**, mechanic, Clarion garage; **Katherine Ehlert**, right-of-way agent 2, Right of Way; **Pamela Ernwine**, materials technician 3, Materials; **Chelsea Gerot**, driver's license clerk senior, Iowa City DL station; **Michael Hagens**, highway technician associate, Muscatine garage; **Travis Hassebroek**, mechanic, Swea City garage; **David House**, highway technician associate, Sabula garage; **Genny Jacobsen**, driver's license clerk senior, Waterloo DL station; **Gregory Kramer**, mechanic, Algona garage; **Troy Lower**, mechanic, Williamsburg garage; **Amy Metcalfe**, clerk-specialist, Driver Services; **Sreeparna Mitra**, transportation planner 2, Public Transit; **Larry Newendorp**, mechanic, Knoxville garage; **Ryan Siems**, highway technician associate, Allison garage; **Allison Smyth**, transportation engineer intern, Design; **Justin Wessley**, highway technician associate, Muscatine

garage; **Wendell Wright**, highway technician associate, Muscatine garage

Promotions

Travis Adair, from highway technician associate to highway technician, Creston garage; **John Brott**, from highway technician associate to highway technician associate, Clarion garage; **Timothy Carpenter**, from highway technician associate to equipment operator senior, Clarion garage; **Brent Christian**, from right-of-way agent 3 to right-of-way agent 4, Right of Way; **Edward Engle**, from transportation engineer, Research and Technology Bureau to transportation engineer specialist, Systems Planning; **Elizabeth Fiala**, from driver's license clerk senior to driver's license examiner, Council Bluffs DL station; **Steve Gaulke**, from assistant soils party chief to soils party chief, Design; **Robin Halpin**, from driver's license clerk senior to driver's license examiner, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Mike Jackson**, from compliance officer 2 to public service executive 3, Right of Way; **Daniel Keller**, from program planner 1 to transportation planner 1, Transportation Data; **Jennifer Kolacia**, from transportation planner 1 to transportation planner 2, Systems Planning; **Alan Lohr**, from assistant soils party chief to soils party chief, Design; **Kurt Niggemeyer**, from information technology specialist 3 to information technology specialist

4, Information Technology Division; **Jeff Oppedahl**, from construction technician assistant to soils party chief, Design; **John Raymer**, from highway technician associate to equipment operator senior, Sioux City-Hamilton garage; **Michael Roller**, from highway technician associate to equipment operator senior, Rockwell City garage; **Rick Skinner**, from right-of-way agent 2 to right-of-way agent 3, Right of Way; **Mari Schott Goeke**, from driver's license clerk senior, Cedar Rapids DL station to driver's license examiner, Mason City DL station

Transfers

Tyler Chiri, driver's license clerk, from Des Moines DL station to Ames DL station; **Alan Hammarmeister**, equipment operator senior, from Williams garage to Iowa Falls garage; **Kathy LaRue**, secretary 1, from Traffic and Safety to Design; **Timothy Livingston**, highway technician associate, from Des Moines garage to Carlisle garage; **Charles Thompson**, highway technician, from Altoona garage to Des Moines garage; **Blake Tucker**, highway technician associate, from Albia garage to Ottumwa garage; **Jeffrey Uhlenhopp**, highway technician associate, from Decorah garage to Clarion garage

Retirements

Bruce Page, design technician, Location and Environment

Service awards

Information supplied by the Office of Employee Services for February 2011

45 years

Frank Reyna, District 4 materials

35 years

Roger Ritter, Des Moines garage

30 years

Garry Gengler, Le Mars garage; **Russell Lutjen**, Materials; **Randy Patterson**, Transportation Data; **Cindy Shearer**, Systems Planning; **Debra Thompson**, Information Technology Division

25 years

Marlene Jensen, District 4 Office

20 years

Sharon Christensen, Des Moines DL station; **Jeffrey Dietrich**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **Loran Hackman**, Motor Vehicle Enforcement; **William Piper**, Creston construction; **Thomas Prine**, Des Moines garage; **Donald Tebben**, Program Management

15 years

Mike Malchow, District 3 Office

10 years

Alan Atwood, District 6 Office; **Mike Burton**, Williams garage; **Christina Butler**, Cedar Rapids DL station; **Heather Gugler**,

District 6 Office; **Marvin Hodapp**, Sidney garage; **Jay Hovick**, Information Technology Division; **Philip Jensen**, Support Services; **Jimmy Lemonds**, Ottumwa garage; **Kenneth McLaughlin**, Sigourney garage; **Jason Oathoudt**, Corning garage; **Douglas Swan**, Washington garage; **Lucas Weigel**, District 1 Office

5 years

James Fox, DeSoto garage; **Mary Starr**, Research and Technology Bureau

New product helping keep windshields clear

Like many DOTers, Jim Dowd in the Office of Maintenance receives reports, newsletters and other information from many different sources. Once in awhile, a nugget of information with a little more value than the rest pops out.

"I was reading a report from the Minnesota DOT (MnDOT) that referenced a product they were experimenting with to keep vehicle windshields free of snow and ice during winter operations," said Dowd. "I decided to do a little digging and found the product, called Crystal Fusion™, and thought it might be worth testing on Iowa DOT trucks, too."

The product was chosen by the Winter Equipment Committee for testing using research funds allocated to the committee for investigating new products. Dowd purchased 12 Crystal Fusion kits to be installed on two vehicles in each district. "Each kit runs about \$199 and includes the product and tools to apply it to the windshield," said Dowd, "If we decide to order more product, it will cost about half the original price because the application tools that come with the original kits can be reused."

The product, which is supposed to bond with the windshield glass at the molecular level, claims to make the glass resistant to scratches, chips and the buildup of snow and ice. "Visibility during a snowstorm is a major safety issue for our snowfighters," said Dowd. "We want to do anything we can do to increase their ability to see more clearly. We also hope to find that we can reduce costs by reducing the incidence of chipped and cracked windshields."

The product information and the report from MnDOT also say Crystal Fusion is supposed to last the life of the windshield. The DOT's kits were installed in each district, usually on one highway maintenance supervisor's pickup and one snowplow. Bill Luko, District 5 mechanic, said, "The product was easy to apply in a two-part chemical process. So far, it seems to work very well. In our district, I put it on my pickup and one of the supervisor's pickups. If it continues to perform as well as it has so far and the budget will allow, I would like to start putting it on snowplow windshields."



INSIDE

INSIDE is developed to help keep all Iowa DOT employees informed about critical issues affecting them, recognize DOT employees for their excellent service and share interesting aspects in the lives of our co-workers. For more information, contact Tracey Bramble, Office of Media and Marketing Services, at 515-239-1314 or e-mail tracey.bramble@dot.iowa.gov.

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**Iowa Department
of Transportation**

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PLEASE RECYCLE THIS ISSUE

On the cover: Breezy, snowy December day at DOT headquarters in Ames.

February I-Spy clue: A shot from his arrow is sure to defrost any heart

January I-Spy solution: There is a window missing on the left side of the Capitol dome.

Service Area	Correspondent	Phone
District 1	Lori Wilkens , Des Moines	515-261-9500
District 2	Lu Mohorne , Mason City	641-423-7584
District 3	MaryBeth Banta , Sioux City	712-276-1451
District 4	Marlene Jensen , Atlantic	712-243-3355
District 5	Brenda Hadley , Fairfield	641-472-6142
District 6	Sandi Byers , Cedar Rapids	319-364-0235
Bridges and Structures	Judy Whitney , Ames	515-233-7917
Construction	Nancy McMenamin , Ames	515-239-1353
Contracts	Peg Muxfeldt , Ames	515-239-1422
Design	Judy Lensing , Ames	515-239-1469
General Counsel	Chris Crow , Ames	515-239-1509
Information Technology Division	Colette Simpson , Ames	515-233-7728
Local Systems	Gail Nordholm , Ames	515-239-1528
Location and Environment	Susie McCullough , Ames	515-239-1225
Maintenance	Cindy Shipley , Ames	515-239-1971
Materials	Brian Squier , Ames	515-233-7915
Modal offices	Cathy Mather , Ames	515-239-1140
Motor Vehicle Division	Diann McMillen , Ankeny	515-237-3250
Operations and Finance Division	Sheri Anderson , Ames	515-239-1340
Research and Technology Bureau	Tami Bailiff , Ames	515-239-1646
Right of Way	Tami Bailiff , Ames	515-239-1216
Systems Planning	Peggy Riecken , Ames	515-239-1664
Traffic and Safety	Stephanie Anderson , Ames	515-239-1746
Transportation Data	Jodi Clement , Ames	515-239-1289

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Lasting impressions

They get banged up, hit by bugs and other critters, lose their reflective quality and otherwise just plain wear out over time. But what is the most cost-effective way to cycle through worn out vehicle license plates? Tina Hargis, director of the Office of Vehicle Services, says replacing all 4 million plates on Iowa vehicles is not the answer. "While some people might like a new license plate design, the cost of replacing all the plates in the state just isn't justified."

Rather than reissue all Iowa plates, as has been done in the past, the Iowa DOT is considering a "rolling" replacement cycle that will replace only those plates that have reached an age that is beyond their usual life-span. This would allow replacement of older plates without unnecessarily replacing newer ones.

The Iowa DOT is still considering a number of issues relevant to the "rolling" replacement concept, including the best and most cost-effective method for delivering new plates, the proper age a plate should be retired and an appropriate date to begin implementing this process.

The only changes in appearance being considered are the sequence of the alpha-numeric characters and color of the alpha-numeric characters and other text (state and county name) on the plate.

Hargis said the current alpha-numeric sequence (three numbers followed by three letters) used on Iowa license plates will reach the maximum possible combinations near the beginning of 2012. She continued, "When the current sequence runs out, the newly issued plates will use a reverse alpha-numeric sequence (three letters followed by three numbers). This will not affect the design on the plates."

Also up for discussion is changing the color of the alpha-numeric characters and other text on newly issued license plates from dark blue to black. Hargis said, "If implemented, this will affect only the standard plates and specialty plates that employ the blue and white background. This would not affect specialty plates that employ a special color for the alpha-numeric characters as part of their design, such as collegiate and firefighter plates."

Changing the characters to black will increase the contrast with the background making them easier to read, which is important to law enforcement. It will also make plate production more consistent and cost-effective.

The Iowa DOT will continue to work with Iowa Prison Industries, county treasurers and law enforcement to develop and implement a final plan that is cost effective and efficient. The Iowa DOT will advise owners of vehicles registered in Iowa of any changes that affect them once final decisions are made.

In the meantime, a motor vehicle owner always has the option to replace plates that have become worn or faded; and Iowa law requires a motor vehicle owner to replace plates that are lost or have become illegible. The fee for a set of replacement plates (other than special plates issued to motor vehicle manufacturers, transporters, wholesalers and dealers) is \$5. A motor vehicle owner that needs to obtain replacement plates should contact the county treasurer in the county where the motor vehicle is registered.

The Iowa DOT first issued the standard blue and white plates with the town and country landscape design in 1997. In 1999, the embossed version of the plate was replaced by a flat plate, but the design did not change.

